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# ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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June 1975

## Report by the Task Force on Priorities and Procedures

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I. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES  
IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Recommendation

*We recommend that the Board of Supervisors instruct the Chief Administrative Officer to adopt a procedure that will apply whenever the Board initiates action to establish a new commission or committee.*

*The procedure will be that the Chief Administrative Officer will prepare a report and recommendation which (a) includes an analysis of whether the new commission or committee is needed, (b) includes an analysis whether it will duplicate the work of other commissions and committees, and (c) lists in detail the provisions to be incorporated in the ordinance establishing the commission or committee.*

Analysis

In August, 1974, the Board of Supervisors requested the Economy and Efficiency Commission to conduct a study of all the commissions and committees in the County and report our findings back to the Board.

Since that time, among other studies requested by the Board, we have submitted a report on the Committee on Emergency Medical Care containing a number of recommendations reconstituting that committee and specifying in detail its responsibilities. In that report we pointed out that one of the principal problems affecting the operation of the committee was that the legislation relating to the committee (State law and three Board orders) did not clearly define the responsibilities of the committee or the basic policies and principles by which it should operate.

This deficiency we find is typical of most commissions and committees. We have concluded, therefore, that one of the principal actions which the Board might take to improve the effectiveness of its commissions and committees is to specify clearly through a formal Board ordinance what the purpose of the com-

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES  
IN THE YEAR 1877

CHAPTER I

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CHAPTER II

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mission or committee is and how it should operate. The ordinance should include a list of responsibilities, number and type of members, method of appointment, basic policies and principles of operation, and method of staffing, if required.

Obviously the task of establishing such an ordinance for each of the 100 commissions and committees in the County will be extensive. Nevertheless, as we proceed through our study of commissions and committees, we expect to recommend in each case that the Board adopt an ordinance governing the operation of the commission, assuming, that is, that we recommend that the commission continue in operation and that it not be abolished or consolidated with another commission. In the meantime, we recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt the procedure in our recommendation when establishing any new commission or committee.

Our recommendations on the Committee on Emergency Medical Care provide a model for the types of provisions which we believe should be contained in the ordinance establishing a new commission. In that report, we also recommended that the committee itself establish internal operating procedures, consistent with the provisions of the ordinance, covering such matters as the nomination and election of officers, terms of office, rules of order for meetings, and similar matters.

As a further model, we have also developed a recommended ordinance for our own commission and a set of internal operating procedures. While other commissions and committees will require different ordinances and internal procedures, this material should provide a useful illustration of the concept we have in mind.

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## II. RECOMMENDED ORDINANCE FOR THE ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION

*We recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt an ordinance governing the operation of the Economy and Efficiency Commission. This ordinance should contain the following provisions:*

### Responsibility

At the request of the Board of Supervisors, or on its own initiative, to examine any operation of County government and to submit recommendations to the Board of Supervisors directed towards improving government economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.

### Commission Members and Method of Appointment

1. The commission shall consist of 21 members. Twenty shall be appointed by the Board of Supervisors upon nomination of four by each Supervisor. The twenty-first member shall be the retiring foreman of the previous year's Grand Jury.
2. Appointment shall be for a two-year term. Members may be reappointed. The foreman of the Grand Jury shall serve for one year until he is replaced by the next retiring foreman.
3. Members shall receive no compensation for attendance at meetings.

### Criteria for Appointment to the Commission

1. Members appointed to the commission should not be in a position to augment their incomes or promote their special interests through membership on the commission.
2. Members should be broadly representative of the community.
3. Members should be knowledgeable, active, or interested in community affairs and should be available for at least two or three half days a month for commission and task force meetings and commission work.
4. No member of the commission shall be a County employee.

### Principles of Operation

1. The commission shall appoint and direct such staff as authorized by the Board of Supervisors. (The staff at present consists of an

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11/10/1913 (1913-1914)

The committee have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration.

Yours faithfully,  
The Secretary

In the event of your desire to have the same referred to the committee, you will be pleased to inform us by return of post.

11/10/1913 (1913-1914)

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executive secretary, a staff specialist, and a secretary to the commission.) The executive secretary and other professional specialists will be employed under individual contracts with the County and independent of the civil service system. The secretary to the commission will be in the classified service on an item established by the County.

2. The County shall furnish appropriate office space, equipment, and supplies to support the work of the commission.

3. The commission shall establish appropriate operating procedures covering such matters as the nomination and election of officers, terms of office, policies and procedures governing the conduct of commission studies and the obligations of commission members, and responsibilities of the officers, such sub-committees as may be established, and the staff.

The above provisions, we believe, cover the requirements for an ordinance governing the operation of the Economy and Efficiency Commission. The next section contains the operating procedures which the commission has established as appropriate and consistent with the ordinance provisions.

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### III. OPERATING PROCEDURES OF THE ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION

Following are the policies and procedures which our commission has adopted governing its own operation.

#### Commission Meetings

The full commission will meet once a month on a regularly scheduled day. If there is not enough business to conduct, the meeting may be cancelled by the chairperson. The chairperson may also call other commission meetings as required.

#### Election of Officers

1. The officers of the commission shall consist of a chairperson and a vice chairperson.
2. The officers shall serve for a one-year term. Officers may serve more than one term.
3. The officers shall be selected in the following manner.
  - (a) Prior to the January meeting each year, the staff will mail the description of the duties of the chairperson to the full commission.
  - (b) At the January meeting all members present will list their first, second, and third choices for chairperson on a form provided by the staff. If a member does not wish to list a second or third choice, he or she may omit them.
  - (c) These lists will later be tabulated by the staff on the following point system: First place, five points; second place, three points; third place, one point. The staff will then contact, by phone, the three persons receiving the most points to determine if they are available for the position.
  - (d) An alphabetical list of the nominees willing to serve will be sent to commission members prior to the February meeting. The list must contain at least two nominees and will include their backgrounds and qualifications. Members who cannot attend the February meeting may request and submit an absentee ballot.
  - (e) The election for chairperson will be held by secret ballot at the February meeting.





- (f) The newly elected chairperson will appoint the vice chairperson.
- (g) If the office of chairperson becomes vacant, an election will be held, using the same procedure, to fill the vacancy.

#### Executive Committee

An executive committee will be established composed of the chairperson, the vice chairperson, and the chairpersons of the current study task forces. The chairpersons of the task forces in existence at the end of the appointment year (August) will automatically continue on the executive committee for one more year.

#### Task Forces

Commission studies will be conducted by task forces. The chairperson of the commission will announce the intention to appoint a new task force to conduct a study at a full commission meeting. Any member interested in serving on the task force can notify the chairperson. The chairperson will then appoint the task force and the chairperson of the task force.

When a task force has completed a report, it will present it to the full commission for final review. After approval of the report, or approval with changes, it will be released for public distribution and presentation to the Board of Supervisors.

#### Commission Studies

1. The commission's task is to undertake studies of systems and processes that affect government economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.
2. Proposals for studies may come from:
  - (1) Board of Supervisors
  - (2) Commission members
  - (3) Commission staff
  - (4) Grand Jury
  - (5) Civic organizations
  - (6) County and local government personnel
  - (7) The public
3. Guidelines for setting priorities
  - (1) Potential impact on economy or effectiveness
  - (2) Fundamental long-range organizational or operational improvement
  - (3) Feasibility - chance of success
  - (4) Timeliness or urgency
  - (5) Source of request
  - (6) Date of request and current workload





4. The commission reserves the right to determine its own priorities. While it will always seriously consider a request for study by the Board of Supervisors, it may inform the Board that it considers other current studies to have higher priority.

#### General Operating Policies

1. If a member wishes to endorse a political candidate, a ballot proposition, or a controversial issue on which the commission has not taken a stand, the member may do so only if no reference is made to membership on the commission.
2. If a member violates the above, the commission shall consider (a) asking for a retraction, (b) notifying the appointing supervisor of the action and urging that the member be asked to resign, or (c) voting censure of the member.
3. Members who wish to run for County office or apply for County employment shall resign prior to doing so.
4. The chairperson may speak for the commission on those issues on which the commission has taken a position. On other relevant issues the chairperson must consult with members of the executive committee and secure the majority approval. If there is not time to consult with the executive committee, the chairperson will be free to express personal views but will indicate that he or she is expressing a view on which the commission has not taken formal action.
5. If the news media or any organization, public or private, invites a member to represent, or to speak for, the commission, the member shall clear it with the chairperson in advance.
6. A quorum shall be defined as one more than half the members of the commission, executive committee, or task force.

#### Duties of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Task Force Chairpersons, Executive Committee and Staff

##### The duties of the chairperson are:

1. To preside over full commission meetings and to determine the agenda of the meetings. To call special meetings when necessary, e.g., when an emergency report should be released before the next regular meeting.
2. To determine the membership of task forces for commission studies and to appoint the chairpersons and members of the task forces.
3. To confer with the staff on all matters relating to the activities of the commission and to provide direction to the staff in relationship to these matters.



4. To confer with the Supervisors when appropriate and discuss with them, in particular, the contents of commission reports prior to their release. To coordinate the visits of the other members of the commission with their respective supervisors.
5. To coordinate all presentations of commission reports or other matters before the Board of Supervisors.
6. To review with the Board of Supervisors, when necessary, the size and compensation of the staff.
7. To represent, or request other members of the commission or staff to represent, the commission before government agencies or civic organizations.
8. To represent, or to request other members of the commission or staff to represent, the commission in communications with the news media.
9. To monitor Board meetings and be prepared to respond to the inquiries of Board members on an ad hoc basis.

The duties of the vice chairperson are:

1. To preside over meetings of the full commission in the absence of the chairperson.
2. To perform any other responsibilities at the direction of the chairperson.

The duties of the task force chairpersons are:

1. To preside over task force meetings and to determine the agenda of the meetings.
2. In conjunction with the task force to direct the staff in the conduct of the task force studies.
3. To make periodic reports on the progress of the task force studies at full commission meetings.
4. To present completed task force reports at full commission meetings and before the Board of Supervisors in conjunction with the chairperson.

The duties of the executive committee are:

1. To recommend to the commission the order and priority of commission studies.



1. The first of the two main parts of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the various methods which have been proposed for the determination of the rate of reaction in a system of two reacting species. It is shown that the method of initial rates is the most reliable and that the method of half-lives is the least reliable.

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3. The third part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the various methods which have been proposed for the determination of the activation energy of a reaction. It is shown that the method of initial rates is the most reliable and that the method of half-lives is the least reliable.

4. The fourth part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the various methods which have been proposed for the determination of the rate constant of a reaction. It is shown that the method of initial rates is the most reliable and that the method of half-lives is the least reliable.

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2. To make decisions or otherwise act for or represent the commission on emergency matters when there is insufficient time to call a full commission meeting.
3. To advise and consult with the chairperson, as appropriate, on activities involving the commission.
4. To review periodically the size and use of the staff.

The duties of the staff are:

1. To suggest to the executive committee areas of investigation which could result in substantial improvement in economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.
2. Under the direction of the chairperson, the executive committee, or task force chairpersons, to conduct interviews or otherwise obtain the appropriate information and prepare analyses of this information in the conduct of commission studies.
3. To prepare task force and commission reports for review by the task force and the full commission.
4. To prepare minutes of meetings and to maintain appropriate notes and correspondence as necessary to support commission activities, including the sending of meeting notices, and agendas when possible, and other appropriate information associated with commission activities to task force and commission members.
5. To keep the chairperson, task force chairpersons, and other commission members informed of all County activities associated with or affecting the commission's responsibilities.
6. As directed by the chairperson, to confer with the Supervisors, their staffs, and other County officials on commission activities.
7. As directed by the chairperson, to represent the commission before other government agencies, civic organizations, and the news media.
8. To maintain the daily operation of the commission office in support of commission activities.

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